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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MAPUTO 001008

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MZ](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: PRESIDENCY MINISTER ON ZIMBABWE

REF: SECSTATE 112727

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Todd C. Chapman, Reasons 1.4(b+d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY/ACTION: Minister of the Presidency Antonio Sumbana expressed significant frustration to the Charge on October 23 about the failure of factions in Zimbabwe to achieve a lasting political solution. He said that Mozambican President Armando Guebuza had many important domestic issues to address and that the prolongation of Zimbabwe's political instability negatively affected Mozambique. Sumbana roundly criticized Tsvangirai for not having gone to the October 23 Troika meeting in Swaziland, calling it a lost opportunity to shame Mugabe in front of his peers. Sumbana said that Tsvangirai needs to learn to work with regional leaders to gain credibility and to reduce the perception by his detractors that he was a pawn of the UK and the U.S. Sumbana suggested that Tsvangirai ask for a private meeting with Guebuza, whether in Harare, Maputo or elsewhere. Sumbana said that the GRM wants to help Zimbabwe achieve a solution, citing Mozambique's own experience. While the GRM is still not ready to explicitly call for Mugabe to step down, it is growing increasingly annoyed by his refusal to allow a true transition to occur. South Africa's Mbeki arrives in Maputo on Sunday to coordinate with Guebuza before traveling to Harare on Monday. Should there be any additional points beyond those contained in reftel that Washington would want delivered to Guebuza before Mbeki's arrival on Sunday, we believe that the GRM is most willing to take them on board. END SUMMARY/ACTION.

"Why Can't These Children Get Along?"

¶2. (C) The Charge delivered reftel points to Minister of the Presidency Antonio Sumbana on October 23. Sumbana said the GRM was disappointed with the state of affairs in Zimbabwe, as Mozambican officials had thought the September 15 accords would lead to a permanent solution. Sumbana noted that after all, in Mozambique there had been a much worse conflict--a full-blown civil war with many deaths--yet the warring factions were able to put down their arms, stop fighting, have discussions, and come to a lasting peace. Sumbana wondered aloud why Zimbabwe, which has better, more experienced politicians than Mozambique, couldn't get this done. Almost in exasperation, he asked, "Why can't these children get along?"

¶3. (C) Sumbana said (again with some frustration) that Mozambican President Armando Guebuza doesn't have time to deal with these 'children' as the GRM has many issues to deal with at home such as the upcoming local elections, and concerns about narcotrafficking and corruption. Yet, he said, Zimbabwe affects Mozambique negatively, with increased crime and unemployment due to Zimbabwean illegals here, and asked, "What can we do? We are always in trouble with

Zimbabwe." He added that Guebuza has delivered strong messages many times in private directly to Mugabe, who will readily agree to complete a genuine transition. Guebuza leaves thinking an understanding has been reached--but then advisors get to Mugabe and change his mind, and the agreement falters, according to Sumbana.

Swazi Meeting a Lost Opportunity for Tsvangirai

14. (C) Sumbana said that the GRM believes Tsvangirai made a mistake in not going to the Troika meeting in Swaziland October 20--it was a lost opportunity. He said that Tsvangirai could have upstaged Mugabe completely--in front of all the other heads of state, he could have waved his inadequate travel documents, and demanded that Mugabe explain why he wasn't honoring the September 15 agreement. Instead, the Swazi king was left to wonder why Tsvangirai, by his absence, didn't show any respect to the other leaders. After all, said Sumbana, many heads of state traveled a long way to meet with them.

Tsvangirai Needs to Work with Regional Govts

15. (C) Sumbana said that Tsvangirai needs to learn how to work with other governments in the region so that he can be seen as credible, and not just as a pawn of the United Kingdom and the USG. "If he wants to be a regional leader, then he needs to act like one." He suggested that Tsvangirai, if he wants, should send a message--and it

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wouldn't have to be secret--asking to speak with Guebuza alone, a meeting that could happen in Harare, Maputo, or anywhere else.

There Needs to be a Transition in Zimbabwe

16. (C) Asked what the GRM's objective for Zimbabwe is, Sumbana replied that the GRM wants to help Zimbabweans find a solution to the political impasse. He said that Mugabe needs to follow regional examples like Mozambique's Joaquim Chissano or the change within South Africa's ANC, where there have been (relatively) peaceful transitions of power. He claimed that Mugabe was the only regional leader to condemn to changeover in the ANC, and said Mugabe needs to understand that the state doesn't belong to an individual, but to the entire nation's people.

Mbeki in Maputo Sunday

17. (C) Sumbana indicated that President Guebuza was only going to Harare on Monday October 27 because of his role on the Troika, and that the Swazi king would not/not go. The Swazi's absence left Guebuza concerned that Mozambique would be blamed for failure. He added that South Africa's Mbeki would arrive in Maputo on Sunday so that the two could coordinate their messages before flying to Harare together. Curiously, Sumbana believed that Mbeki, now a former leader himself, might be in a better place now to convince Mugabe to prepare for a genuine transition.

Comment/Action: Open to Suggestions

18. (C) Sumbana was significantly more annoyed and frustrated with Zimbabwe during this discussion than in previous interactions on this subject. He clearly conveyed the level of inconvenience that President Guebuza feels about having to

deal with this situation, right when local election campaigning is about to begin, and concerns about narcotrafficking and corruption are on the rise (septels). Should there be any additional points beyond those contained in reftel that Washington would want delivered to Guebuza before Mbeki's arrival on Sunday, we believe that the GRM is most willing to take them on board.

Chapman